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Contact: Shelly Flock (csslf@eiu.edu)
Vicki Woodard (csvns@eiu.edu)
217-581-7650
217-581-8444 (fax)

NEWS

Office of Media Relations
600 Lincoln Avenue
Charleston, IL 61920-3099
(www.eiu.edu/~pubaff/omr.htm)

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EIU RETAINS TOP TIER RANKING IN U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

CHARLESTON – Eastern Illinois University has retained its spot in the top tier of *U.S. News & World Report's* top public universities in the Midwest.

Rankings released in the magazine's annual guide to "America's Best Colleges" shows Eastern once again ranks 31st among 143 public and private Midwestern/regional institutions, and is the only public university in Illinois listed in the first, or top, tier (four tiers total) in the "Best Universities – Master's (Regional/Midwest)" ranking category.

(This category represents those universities that offer a full range of undergraduate degrees and some master's degree programs, but few, if any, doctoral programs.)

Of the 143 Midwestern master's universities, only 37 were placed in the top tier.

In addition, the magazine rated Eastern fifth among the top 12 public Midwestern universities with master's programs.

"It is thrilling to learn that Eastern is again ranked in the first tier of Midwestern master's universities," said Louis V. Hencken, Eastern's interim president. "Eastern has a long steady tradition of academic excellence, supported by strong nurturing relationships with our students.

"Our rankings reflect a continuing commitment by our faculty and staff to uphold these traditions," he added.

Rankings are based on schools' academic reputations, student selectivity, faculty resources, graduation and retention rates, financial resources and alumni giving.

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Eastern Illinois University emphasizes distinguished teaching in the liberal arts, sciences and selected professions. A traditional, residential state university of recognized quality, Eastern enrolls more than 10,000 students in undergraduate and graduate programs. The university, located in Charleston, also serves the region through a variety of non-credit and off-site degree programs, as well as cultural and recreational opportunities. Eastern's pursuit of excellence attracts well-qualified students of an increasingly diverse population and a teaching faculty active in research and public service who utilize the latest technology.

Eastern's greatest strengths in addition to its academic reputation are its average graduation rate of 66 percent, a freshman-to-sophomore retention rate of 81 percent, and percentage of full-time faculty (96 percent).

The newsstand book, "America's Best Colleges," which contains the U.S. News college rankings, is slated to go on sale Monday, Sept. 16. Most of the rankings and some of the articles from the book will be in the Sept. 23 issue of *U.S. News & World Report*, which also goes on sale Sept. 16.